

Message Text

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11

ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 EUR-25 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02

INR-09 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-14

USIA-12 COME-00 EB-11 LAB-06 SIL-01 OMB-01 TRSE-00

RSR-01 /122 W

----- 028027

R 261400 Z MAR 73

FM AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6261

INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMCONSUL DHAHRAN

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

C O N F I D E N T I A L KUWAIT 0945

FROM WHEELLOCK DOHA

BEIRUT FOR LABATT

E. O. 11652 : GDS

TAGS: PINS ELAB QA

SUBJ: STRIKE OF SAUDI ARABIAN ENLISTED MEN IN QATAT ARMY

1. BEGINNING ABOUT MARCH 15 A CONSIDERABLE PROPORTION OF THE APPROXIMATELY 1500 SAUDI ARABIAN ENLISTED MEN IN THE QATARI ARMY AND POLICE FORCE HAVE BEEN ON A STRIKE FOR HIGHER PAY AND FRINGE BENEFITS. BY MARCH 18 AS MANY AS 200 POLICE AND PERHAPS 500 ARMY PERSONNEL WERE INVOLVED. ON MARCH 18 THE GOVERNMENT OF QATAR DECIDED TO DISMISS ALL STRIKING MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES AND POLICE AND TO DEPORT THEM IMMEDIATELY BACK TO SAUDI ARABIA. THE FIRST CONTINGENT OF SOMETHING OVER 100 MEN WERE DRIVEN TO THE SAUDI BORDER AND DEPARTED ON MARCH 20. THESE

DEPARTATIONS ARE CONTINUING.

2. HIGH SECURITY OFFICIALS HAVE TOLD THE BRITISH AMBASSADOR THAT THEY DO NO CONSIDER THE EFFECT OF THE LOSS OF THESE MEN WILL BE
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VERY GREAT EITHER ON THE ARMY OR THE POLICE FORCE. THIS MAY WELL BE TRUE REGARDING THE ARMY BUT THE POLICE FORCE MAY FEEL THE PINCH IN THE COMING WEEKS.

3. THERE IS EVERY INDICATION THAT THE STRIKE WAS GENUINELY CAUSED BY A DESIRE FOR PAY AND CONDITIONS AT LEAST EQUAL TO THAT OF NATIVE QATARI TROOPS. THERE SEEMS NO REASON TO BELIEVE THAT THERE WAS ANY DEEPER POLITICAL MOTIVATION BEHIND THE STRIKE. QATAR OFFICIALS APPARENTLY WERE TAKEN BY SUPRISE AND WERE SOMEWHAT DISTTURBED AT THE NUMBERS INVOLVED AND THE COHESIVENESS OF THE STRIKE. TO DATE THERE HAS APPARENTLY BEEN NO WORD OF THE STRIKE AND ITS AFTERMATH IN THE PRESS. THE GOVERNMENT OF QATAR IS TAKING THE ATTITUDE THAT IT DID NOT HAPPEN AND HAS URGED DIPLOMATS TO HELP THEM KEEP THE WHOLE THING QUIET.
STOLTZFUS

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*** Current Classification *** CONFIDENTIAL

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